

Serial No: 10/734,664
Filed: December 12, 2003
Docket: 2526 US

REMARKS

Claims 1-60 are pending in the present application. By the Office Action dated January 25, 2006, the Examiner has rejected claims 18, 32-35 and 43-45. The Examiner has allowed claims 1-17 and 46-60 and objected to claims 19-31 and 36-42 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but that would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are responsive to the rejections and objection presented in the Examiner's Office Action.

The Examiner has rejected claims 18, 32, 34, 35 and 45 under 35 USC § 102(a) as being anticipated by Helen Brown Elliot, et al., US 2003/0103058 (hereinafter, "Elliot"). While expressing neither agreement nor disagreement with the Examiner's rejection (which rejection, Applicants in no way concede), Applicants have cancelled claims 18, 32, 34, 35 and 45 to place this application in condition for allowance and retain the right to represent claims 18, 32, 34, 35 and 45 in a continuation application.

The Examiner has rejected claim 33 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elliot in view of well known art. While expressing neither agreement nor disagreement with the Examiner's rejection (which rejection, Applicants in no way concede), Applicants have cancelled claim 33 to place this application in condition for allowance and retain the right to represent claim 33 in a continuation application.

The Examiner has rejected claims 43 and 44 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elliot in view of Prior (US 0929273). While expressing neither agreement nor disagreement with the Examiner's rejection (which rejection, Applicants in no way concede), Applicants have cancelled claims 43 and 44 to place this application in condition for allowance and retain the right to represent claims 43 and 44 in a continuation application.

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The Examiner has objected to claims 19-31 and 36-42 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but states that claims 19-31 and 36-42 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has rewritten claim 19 in independent form, including all of the limitations of its respective base claim (claim 18) to overcome the Examiner's objection. Applicants have also amended claim 36 to depend from amended claim 19 so that claims 18-31 and 36-42 all depend directly or indirectly (via an intervening dependent claim) from allowable independent amended base claim 19 and are thus patentable as further limitations upon an allowable base claim. Claim 36 was also amended to correct a typographical error.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-17, 19-31, 36-42, and 46-60 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

An extension of three (3) months is requested and a Notification of Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 with the appropriate fee is attached hereto.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone or facsimile if the Examiner believes that such a communication would advance the prosecution of the present invention.

Respectfully submitted,

July 25, 2007

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